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ABSTRACT

This guide is intended to give concrete suggestions to home economics teachers on preparing and carrying out a public relations program. Stressing that public relations should not and cannot wait for a spectacular event to attract public attention, the booklet gives a variety of strategies to portray to different audiences what home economics really is. Going beyond tips for writing a news release, the publication promotes defining what should be sold in home economics--what home economics is; how it works; what it can do for its users; and, what its important features are. This task must be completed before attempting to sell home economics in the school, the community, and to state and national policymakers. The guide is divided into four sections. Section 1 presents concrete suggestions for assessing one's program as a basis for developing a public relations strategy. The next section provides multiple ideas for projecting that picture in a school setting and in the community. The roles of students, teachers, advisory council members, and parents are outlined in section 3 along with suggestions for influencing public policy. The final section provides some additional public relations aids and references. (KC)

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PROJECTING
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PROJECTING A PICTURE
OF HOME ECONOMICS

Public Relations in Secondary Programs

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Foreword

The ability to plan and conduct a systematic public relations program may well be among the necessary competencies for home economics teachers in these times of declining student population and budgetary constraints. It has been said that a narrow perception of home economics as a program bounded by sewing and cooking with little else in between is due to publicity given only to those aspects of the program. As a result of this admonition teachers unprepared in public relations skills and unwilling to perpetuate an incomplete and misleading view may be paralyzed into a do-nothing state. In *Projecting a Picture of Home Economics*, authors Anderson, Ley and Mears have provided a specific and concrete help to teachers as they become actively engaged in public relations activities for their programs. Stressing that public relations should not and cannot wait for a spectacular event to attract public attention, the authors give a variety of strategies to portray to different audiences what home economics really is.

Projecting a Picture of Home Economics goes beyond the usual tips for writing a news release and preparing a window display. A strong case is made for knowing what is to be sold—what it is, how it works, what it can do for its users, its important features—before attempting to sell home economics in the school, the community, and beyond to state and national policymakers. Several techniques to aid in this dimension of public relations are given.

In this monograph you will find a broad view of the scope and depth of public relations in secondary programs with a range of useable, effective techniques that can be employed by the teacher as an individual or in concert with students, parents, advisory committees and other professionals. It is notable that home economists in other professional activities will find many suggestions that are adaptable to their situations.

The Home Economics Education Association is in the debt of Edna Page Anderson, Connie J. Ley, and Ruth Anne Mears for the time and effort they have given to bring this product of their combined expertise to the home economics professions.

Joanna B. Smith
President

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Introduction

Classroom teachers are often encouraged to create good public relations within the community and school. At a time when budget crunches threaten to cut or eliminate home economics programs, strong public relations are of the utmost importance. Public relations efforts can also help define home economics for the public, recruit students into programs and gain the support and cooperation of community and administration. While there has been talk about the importance of public relations, little concrete help has been provided for teachers. Providing that help is the goal of this publication.

A dimension of public relations which is often ignored is the idea that before you can sell a product, you must know exactly what that product is, how it works, what it can do for the purchaser and the important features or the selling points of the product. This thinking makes sense to salespeople, but when we think of public relations for home economics programs, the selling of the program, we do not take care in analyzing these various points.

What is it that home economics programs have to offer or what is our product? Although there are some common features to all programs, each teacher, because of an individual philosophy, will have a variation of the product. The teacher's personal view of the program must be established before any attempt can be made to acquaint others with what is happening in home economics classrooms.

What can the program do for people, what are the important features, how does the program work? These initial questions must be addressed before any public relations efforts are made. On the surface it may sound simple, but a majority of teachers would probably not be able to answer all of the previous questions.

Once the teacher is able to explain the program, the next step is to decide what ways will allow others to view the home economics program as the teacher implements it. Through this entire process, it is important for the teacher to realize that public relations should not and cannot wait for a spectacular event to attract public attention. Only by exposing the everyday operations of the program to the public can an accurate message of what home economics is about be conveyed to audiences.

The bottom line, as Meszaros (1980) has stated, is that "by their practice they shall be known." If our best efforts at public relations include only style shows and teas for faculty and families, then we shall be known now and henceforth as just cooking and clothing!

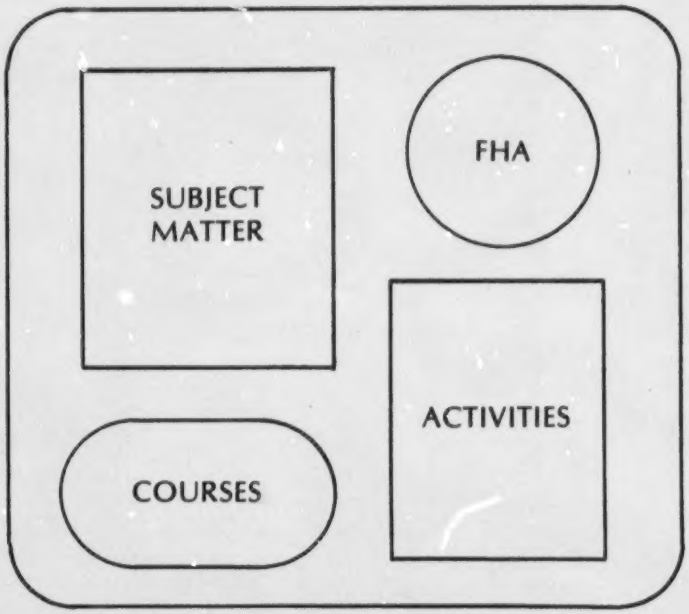
PART I

What Picture of Your Program Do You Project?

A) ONE YOU THINK OTHERS WANT TO SEE
B) ONE YOU LEARNED IN COLLEGE WAS AN IDEAL PROGRAM
C) ONE THAT ACCURATELY DESCRIBES WHAT YOU REALLY DO

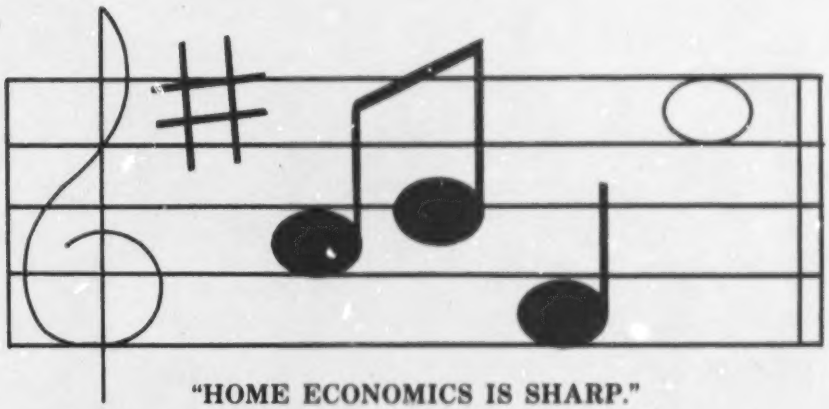
C is the correct response. The next question is how do you develop this accurate description of your program?

GETTING A PICTURE OF YOUR PROGRAM



Before you can present a picture of your program to the public, you need to have something to communicate. The information you communicate needs to come from your program. It is important that your message present an accurate picture of what is really happening in your classroom—not what you think may be happening.

Most public relations usually involves reporting who went some place or did something. Programs have many aspects that can be useful in building a picture of home economics. Thus, there are many everyday occurrences that can be used to educate the public. Three are emphasized here: (1) subject matter and concept emphasis, (2) the program impact on students, and (3) program demographics. You already use a variety of ways to analyze these three program aspects, but the following ideas may serve as additional guidelines.



"HOME ECONOMICS IS SHARP."

Subject Matter Composition: A Melody of Variety

Home economists who are accused of "stitching and stewing" deny that claim, but neglect or avoid describing what home economics really is. A response that works wonders is, "Did you just wake up Rip Van Winkle? Now that you have some time, I'd be glad to tell you about home economics." Then, describe what it is you teach with activities and examples other than foods and clothing.

To help you present your subject matter composition, four techniques are presented:

1. The yearly plan,
2. Curriculum Orientation Survey (C.O.S.),
3. Program evaluation reports, and
4. Parents' Perceptions of Concepts Emphasized in Home Economics questionnaire.

THE YEARLY PLAN

Probably one of the most useful and available techniques is the yearly plan. This plan shows courses taught, sequence of concepts covered in each course, overall goals for each course, and summaries of time spent in each subject area. Yearly plans serve many purposes besides information for public relations. When completed cooperatively with other teachers, they help avoid duplication of subject matter, assure coverage of all content areas, and allow for building upon previous concepts. When kept and filed in the department, they provide a history of program development and assist new teachers in learning about the department. Figure 1 is an example of a format for a yearly plan.

Some uses for this plan are:

- Post in the classroom so students can keep track of what comes next.
- Send to parents to clarify what students will be studying.
- Give a plan to guidance counselors, thus educating them as well as providing a reference for them as they work with students.
- Share the plan with advisory committees, school board members and administrators.

THE CURRICULUM ORIENTATION SURVEY (C.O.S.)

The SECOND technique which will aid in analyzing your program is the Curriculum Orientation Survey (C.O.S.). This test, which is completed by the teacher, measures what you teach in your program. Comparing these results with your yearly plan will help you see if you are teaching what you intend to teach.

The C.O.S. gives you two broad types of information—subject matter and content. Subject matter includes the five generally recognized areas in home economics—human development and the family, home management and family economics, foods and nutrition, textiles and clothing and housing. These will probably be the divisions you used in summarizing the time spent in courses on the yearly plan.

YEARLY PLAN

Teacher _____

Year _____

Goals

Home Economics I

Family Living

Consumer Education

Foods

	Home Economics I	Family Living	Cons. Ed. (1st Sem.) Foods (2nd Sem.)
WEEK DATE	CONCEPTS TAUGHT	CONCEPTS TAUGHT	CONCEPTS TAUGHT
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
28			
29			
30			
31			
32			
33			
34			
35			
36			

Summary of Number of Weeks Spent on Each Subject Area					
Area	No. of Wk.	Area	No. of Wk.	Area	No. of Wk.

FIGURE 1

The C.O.S. also tells about general content emphasis—information, human development, management and values. Three of these are unifying themes that cross all subject matter areas as identified in *Concepts and Generalizations: Their Place in High School Curriculum* (The "Bird Book").

Let's look at an example. Teachers with an information emphasis would think what students *knew about* housing would be important. Those with a human development emphasis would want students to be aware of housing *needs for various people.* A strong emphasis in management of housing would have teachers providing students with experiences in how to *manage resources.* If values were the emphasis, students would *critically examine why* people make certain housing choices. These specific examples using housing subject matter are only representative of many possibilities.

The C.O.S. was developed for comprehensive consumer and homemaking programs. For occupational programs certain subject matter would predominate; however, all content subscales would be applicable to job training programs.

Now's your chance to take the C.O.S.!

LOOK

PROGRAM REVIEWS

A THIRD technique that serves as a possible data source for public relations is accreditation and other program reviews. Final reports have excellent quotes about strengths of the program as well as areas needing improvement. Recommendations from these reports could be used in campaigns to raise money or nonmonetary support for upgrading neglected aspects of the program. State evaluation teams also provide resources for public relations about your department.

PARENTS' PERCEPTIONS

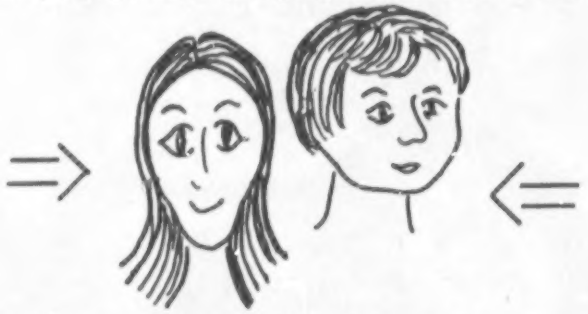
The FOURTH strategy for determining subject matter composition is the instrument, Parent's Perceptions of Concepts Emphasized in Home Economics Programs. This is one form of needs assessment. It may also be used with other community members and school personnel. This device surveys attitudes about what is and what ought to be taught in home economics.

The questionnaire could be administered to parents in an interview over the phone, in person or in writing. In any case, once several parents have completed the device, results can be tallied and summarized to add another dimension to your program picture.

A copy of this survey is on page 16.

Remember this: If people have misconceptions about what you do in your classroom, you have a responsibility to correct those impressions. By analyzing thoroughly what it is you are doing, you will have a broader base for conveying a picture of your program which is accurate.

Program Impact on Students: A Variety of Outcomes



Here are some ways to determine what does or does not appeal to students in the program and also what kind of impact the program has had on learners. Teachers often employ some type of cooperative planning with students at the beginning of the year or at the start of a new unit. Students could rank a listing of concepts they want to learn, be asked to list five things they hope to gain most or do in the course, or make final selection on the concepts to be incorporated in the yearly plan.

(continued on page 17)

CURRICULUM ORIENTATION SURVEY

DIRECTIONS: Read each objective and then circle the appropriate response to indicate the extent to which the objective is included in your teaching.

A. This is not an objective in my teaching.
B. This is an incidental objective in my teaching.
C. This is an important objective in my teaching.
D. This is a major objective in my teaching.

A B C D 1. Define the meaning of management.

A B C D 2. Analyze the results of consumer behavior in relation to intended goals.

A B C D 3. Understand why food must be properly stored.

A B C D 4. Compare the value orientation of individuals reflected in their choice of home furnishings.

A B C D 5. Analyze financial management practices of the family in relation to the stages of the family life cycle.

A B C D 6. Assess the needs, wants, and resources of individuals and families in the selection of living space.

A B C D 7. Illustrate how housing provides the setting for the social development of individuals and of family members and their interactions.

A B C D 8. Evaluate a variety of life styles in terms of how they meet basic human needs differently.

A B C D 9. Assess the resources available for meeting personal and family food needs.

A B C D 10. Propose methods of creating, conserving, and substituting resources.

A B C D 11. Analyze values reflected in an individual's clothing.

A B C D 12. Demonstrate understanding of cooking terms, measurement techniques, and equipment care and use.

A B C D 13. Interpret the process of self-development through which an individual develops a set of values which are important criteria for decision-making.

A B C D 14. Explain how family food preferences vary with the values placed on food.

A B C D 15. Analyze ways in which housing, furnishings, and equipment influence the development of individuals and families.

A B C D 16. Plan for adequate maintenance of living space, home furnishings, and equipment.

A B C D 17. Develop a system for the storage, care, cleaning, and selection of clothing.

A B C D 18. Explain major value orientations of different cultural groups.

A B C D 19. Analyze the influence of the family upon growth and development of a self-concept.

A B C D 20. Explain how clothing reflects an individual's self-concept.

A B C D 21. Analyze the relationship of values to clothing preferences.

A B C D 22. Comprehend the importance of self-understanding in interpersonal relationships.

A B C D 23. Assess the features that tots, young children, the elderly, and the physically handicapped need to have in their clothing.

A B C D 24. Prepare a meal implementing efficient work habits, organization, and appropriate table setting.

A B C D 25. Evaluate resources available for meeting clothing needs.

A B C D 26. Explain ways in which values are changed in relation to food preferences.

A B C D 27. Assess the value basis for different individuals' use of non-material resources.

A B C D 28. Compare the value orientation of different individuals related to their use of money.

A B C D 29. Relate prenatal nutrition and early diet of a child to mental and physical well-being throughout life.

A B C D 30. Describe the rights and responsibilities of both consumer and producer.

A B C D 31. Explain the interaction of heredity and environment on an individual's development.

A B C D 32. Construct a craft project such as macramé, decoupage, etc., to use in decorating one's room or home.

A B C D 33. Plan a rational approach to choosing housing from among the multiplicity of alternatives in the market.

A B C D 34. Plan nutritionally adequate meals stressing basic principles of food preparation and service.

A B C D 35. Recognize furniture representing various periods and styles.

A B C D 36. Assess methods of solving value conflicts related to food choices.

A B C D 37. Assess differences among individuals' and families' values as evidenced by their behavior.

A B C D 38. Contrast construction standards of clothing purchased in a variety of stores with clothing constructed at home.

A B C D 39. Evaluate the changes in today's society that have an impact on the family's management practices.

A B C D 40. Compare the use of living space of individuals from a variety of cultural groups.

A B C D 41. Appraise clothing choices in terms of social, cultural, political, and psychological factors.

A B C D 42. Identify different options available for meeting housing needs.

A B C D 43. Contrast the value orientation of different social groups as reflected in their clothing choices.

A B C D 44. Analyze the different values of individuals related to their preferences for using personal living space.

A B C D 45. Describe the decision-making process.

A B C D 46. Demonstrate ability to use a sewing machine.

A B C D 47. Define the following terms as they relate to people: (a) development, (b) growth, (c) maturation, (d) behavior, and (e) learning.

A B C D 48. Explain the function of values in the management process.

A B C D 49. Explain the function of nutrients in the body.

A B C D 50. List the federal standards for food labeling.

A B C D 51. Identify some basic needs common to all individuals.

A B C D 52. Demonstrate basic skills necessary to construct simple garments, to make simple repairs and alterations.

A B C D 53. Propose implications of the historical, cultural, and sociological significance of food.

A B C D 54. Assess decision-making process as it operates in selecting a life style from among a variety of alternatives.

A B C D 55. Tell how woven and non-woven fabrics are constructed and how they differ in performance.

A B C D 56. Explain how an individual or family consciously or unconsciously expresses their values through housing.

A B C D 57. Analyze the relationship of finances to marital happiness.

A B C D 58. Explain ways in which organization can make management more effective.

A B C D 59. Describe ways in which management of resources increases satisfaction in establishing a chosen life style.

A B C D 60. Explain the relationship of human values to a quality of life.

HOW TO SCORE THE C.O.S. STARTS HERE.

LOOK ↪

SCORING PROCEDURES FOR THE CURRICULUM ORIENTATION SURVEY

1. Transfer your choices to the score sheets on the following pages.

   A = 1 B = 2 C = 3 D = 4

2. Total the score for each column. On the subject matter subscales, scores range from 12 (meaning no emphasis) to 48 (meaning major emphasis).

WHERE DOES YOUR SCORE FOR EACH SUBJECT MATTER FALL?

Here are one teacher's scores as an example:

SUBJECT MATTER	
Human Development and the Family	40
Home Management and Family Economics	28
Food and Nutrition	41
Textiles and Clothing	30
Housing	15

These scores show a program which is probably strong in the areas of food and nutrition and human development. It probably includes very little in the area of housing and gives moderate attention to home management and textiles and clothing.

For the Content subscales, scores range from 15 (meaning no emphasis) to 60 (meaning high emphasis).

WHICH CONTENT AREAS ARE YOU EMPHASIZING?

Here is another example of one teacher's scores for content:

CONTENT	
Information	48
Human Development	52
Management	25
Values	30

These scores indicate that in this teacher's program human development is the prime content focus with information being very important also. There is some attention to values and least attention is probably paid to management content.

WOW! YOU DID IT! Do the results surprise You?

Subject Matter Emphasis Subscales

Human Development and the Family			Home Management and Family Economics			Food and Nutrition		
Item	Letter Chosen	Weight	Item	Letter Chosen	Weight	Item	Letter Chosen	Weight
8	___	___	1	___	___	3	___	___
13	___	___	2	___	___	9	___	___
18	___	___	5	___	___	12	___	___
19	___	___	10	___	___	14	___	___
22	___	___	27	___	___	24	___	___
31	___	___	28	___	___	26	___	___
37	___	___	30	___	___	29	___	___
47	___	___	39	___	___	34	___	___
51	___	___	45	___	___	36	___	___
54	___	___	48	___	___	49	___	___
59	___	___	57	___	___	50	___	___
60	___	___	58	___	___	53	___	___
Your Total		___	Your Total		___	Your Total		___

Textiles and Clothing			Housing		
Item	Letter Chosen	Weight	Item	Letter Chosen	Weight
11	___	___	4	___	___
17	___	___	6	___	___
20	___	___	7	___	___
21	___	___	15	___	___
23	___	___	16	___	___
25	___	___	32	___	___
38	___	___	33	___	___
41	___	___	35	___	___
43	___	___	40	___	___
46	___	___	42	___	___
52	___	___	44	___	___
55	___	___	56	___	___
Your Total		___	Your Total		___

Content Emphasis Subscales

Information

Item	Letter Chosen	Weight
1	___	___
3	___	___
12	___	___
22	___	___
30	___	___
32	___	___
35	___	___
42	___	___
45	___	___
46	___	___
47	___	___
50	___	___
51	___	___
52	___	___
55	___	___
	Your Total	___

Human Development and Interpersonal Relationship

Item	Letter Chosen	Weight
5	___	___
7	___	___
8	___	___
15	___	___
19	___	___
20	___	___
23	___	___
29	___	___
31	___	___
39	___	___
40	___	___
41	___	___
49	___	___
53	___	___
57	___	___
	Your Total	___

Management

Item	Letter Chosen	Weight
2	___	___
6	___	___
9	___	___
10	___	___
13	___	___
16	___	___
17	___	___
24	___	___
25	___	___
33	___	___
34	___	___
38	___	___
54	___	___
58	___	___
59	___	___
	Your Total	___

Values

Item	Letter Chosen	Weight
4	___	___
11	___	___
14	___	___
18	___	___
21	___	___
26	___	___
27	___	___
28	___	___
36	___	___
37	___	___
43	___	___
44	___	___
48	___	___
56	___	___
60	___	___
	Your Total	___

PARENTS' PERCEPTION OF CONCEPTS EMPHASIZED IN HOME ECONOMICS PROGRAMS

The following is a list of concepts often found in home economics programs. Go through the list TWICE. The first time answer yes or no to the question: "Is this an idea that ought to be included in the home economics program?" The second time, answer yes or no to the question: "Is it your perception that your son or daughter is learning this now in home economics?"

	Ought to be Included		Your Perception Is Taught	
1. Child Development	Yes	No	Yes	No
2. Clothing Care	Yes	No	Yes	No
3. Clothing Construction	Yes	No	Yes	No
4. Consumer Education	Yes	No	Yes	No
5. Decision Making	Yes	No	Yes	No
6. Environmental Factors Affecting the Family	Yes	No	Yes	No
7. Families in Different Cultures	Yes	No	Yes	No
8. Family Relationships	Yes	No	Yes	No
9. Financial Management	Yes	No	Yes	No
10. Food Preparation	Yes	No	Yes	No
11. Health	Yes	No	Yes	No
12. Home Management	Yes	No	Yes	No
13. Household Equipment	Yes	No	Yes	No
14. Housing	Yes	No	Yes	No
15. Interior Design	Yes	No	Yes	No
16. Meal Planning	Yes	No	Yes	No
17. Nutrition	Yes	No	Yes	No
18. Parenting	Yes	No	Yes	No
19. Sex Education	Yes	No	Yes	No
20. Textiles	Yes	No	Yes	No
21. Values/Moral Education	Yes	No	Yes	No
22. Work Efficiency	Yes	No	Yes	No

There are a variety of instruments designed to measure student attitudes about home economics. You might use the same listing of concepts suggested earlier for use with parents. Included on page 18 is a device for your use called What Do *You* Think About Home Economics? This could be given to students at the beginning and end of the school year to assess changes in attitudes. All students' answers in a particular class could be totaled and made into a percentage of learners who agree/disagree that home economics will, for example, help them in the area of family living.

Another technique to assess how much students think they have learned would be to have the students rank on a continuum from "a lot" to "very little" how much they learned about certain subjects during the past year. Below are some sample items for this technique.

1	2	3	4	5
I didn't learn a thing about making decisions		I learned some things that will help me be a better decision maker		I feel I know a lot from this class about making decisions

1	2	3	4	5
I haven't learned a thing in this class about eating better		Some things I learned in this class about nutrition have helped me		My eating habits have changed because of what I learned in this class

There are so few tests which measure knowledge about home economics subject matter. Use of these tests is also difficult because teachers vary in the objectives they select to teach and the tests may be developed for different age groups than those you wish to test. SO THE BEST WAY to test changes in students' knowledge is to use instruments you've developed. By testing the same students before and after you have taught a unit you can determine how great an impact you are having. Reviewing resources on test development will help you make sure your tests are valid and reliable. Some examples are: (1) J. S. Ahmann and M. D. Glock, *Evaluating Student Progress: Principles of Tests and Measurements*, 6th ed., Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1981; (2) A. Cross, *Home Economics Evaluation*, Columbus, Ohio: Merrill Pub. Co., 1973; (3) K. B. Green, "Test Item Construction in the Cognitive Domain," Washington, D.C.: Home Economics Education Association, 1979; (4) N. E. Gronlund, "Measurement and Evaluation in Teaching," New York: Macmillan, 1971; (5) H. T. Spitze and M. B. Griggs, "Choosing Evaluation Techniques," Washington, D.C.: Home Economics Education Association, 1976.

FOLLOW-UP ON FORMER STUDENTS

Does home economics affect students' lives after they leave your program? While it is important to get information from students presently enrolled, of even greater importance is long-range impact data on how your teaching has affected students. This is a key question asked by administrators, school board members and legislators.

For this reason, follow-up studies of former students provide another excellent base for public relations. Data you may want to collect from this source include:

- Name/Age/Sex of student
- Year(s) home economics was taken
- Marital status
- Number of children

WHAT DO *YOU* THINK ABOUT HOME ECONOMICS?

DIRECTIONS: Read each of the following statements carefully and then rate it on a scale. Circle the answer which best describes how you feel. It is not necessary to put your name or any other writing on the paper. Circle SA (strongly agree), A (agree), D (disagree), or SD (strongly disagree) depending on how you feel about the statement.

SA	A	D	SD	1. Home economics is very interesting.
SA	A	D	SD	2. I can do very well in home economics.
SA	A	D	SD	3. Home economics will help me in the area of family life.
SA	A	D	SD	4. Everyone should be required to take home economics.
SA	A	D	SD	5. Home economics should be taught in elementary, junior high and senior high schools.
SA	A	D	SD	6. Home economics is as important as other major subjects.
SA	A	D	SD	7. It is important to learn how to eat foods to stay healthy.
SA	A	D	SD	8. It is important to learn how to use money wisely.
SA	A	D	SD	9. It is important to learn how to get along with my family.
SA	A	D	SD	10. It is important to learn how to be a good parent.
SA	A	D	SD	11. It is important to learn how to make decisions about home and family life.
SA	A	D	SD	12. It is important to learn about me and my personality.
SA	A	D	SD	13. It is important to learn how to make the most of my good points.
SA	A	D	SD	14. It is important for males and females to know these things.
SA	A	D	SD	15. Home economics class is a good place to learn the things mentioned in statements 7 to 13.
SA	A	D	SD	16. The things mentioned in the above statements could be better learned in other places than in home economics class. Write here some of those better places.

_____

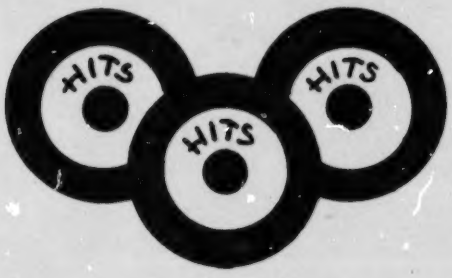
_____

SCORING PROCEDURES: Give Strongly Agree 4 points, Agree 3 points, Disagree 2 points and Strongly Disagree 1 point. The score points are reversed for item 16. Scores range from 16 to 64 with a higher score indicating a more positive attitude.

- Attitudes toward home economics (Put, "What Do You Think About Home Economics?" in past tense and administer it.)
- Areas of family or personal life where home economics helped most
- Ways home economics has helped you achieve your career goals
- Recommendations for current home economics programs
- Most effective aspect of the home economics program

Follow-up is not a one-act play. Compiling information from year to year will give you a long-range view of the accomplishments of your program. Letters from former students are also a good accompaniment to your follow-up studies.

RECORD KEEPING



Program demographics are the easiest and most useful information to collect and retain. Good keeping of demographic data is essential and can save mountains of time. One of the simplest ways to get this information is to keep copies of records you submit to the state department. If you desire more information than the state requires (or if you don't submit records to the state department) create a survey form which may include some of these items:

- student's name
- age of student
- sex of student
- number of brothers/sisters with ages
- any disadvantage/handicap
- marital status of parents
- racial/ethnic group
- previous home economics courses
- parents' or guardian's names
- parents' or guardian's occupation
- student's career goals

Once the information is collected, it needs to be stored conveniently. Forms for each class could be filed together or data could be coded into grade books. The same codes could be used year after year by all teachers in the program. Figure 2 on page 20 and Figure 3 on page 21 show two sample formats. Any format which is used must make sense to you and be convenient for you and perhaps others to use.

For each course, summaries could be made with data from all sections of common courses combined. At the end of the year teachers could report:

- percent of learners males/females
- number of students from single-parent families
- number of handicapped students served
- similarities and differences between level of program offerings, i.e., percent of students in Home Economics I continued into Home Economics II or number of boys in Advanced Foods compared to Child Development
- enrollment trends for different courses.

These surveys can also be used to examine yearly plans. Do changes in particular demographics reflect changes in curriculum emphasis? How has curriculum been adjusted in meeting a changing population? What concepts are added or deleted with more boys in classes?

As you can see, getting a picture of your program is a vital link for any public relations campaign. In order to sell home economics there needs to be a message that is accurate, reliable and based on actual data about the program. Home Economics teachers are in the business of educating not just students, but also educating others about what is really taught in the home economics classroom and why.

ONCE YOU GET THE HANG OF IT, IT'S A SNAP!

Class Parenting

Date 2nd 9 weeks, 1981-82

Pre-requisites Junior or Senior

Budget for Course

Textbook used, if any

FORMAT:

Student's Name	Age	Sex	Siblings O	Siblings Y	Previous Courses	Career Goals	Currently Working	FHA/HERO Member	Course Grade
1. Jean Frazier	14	F	1	2	1 a,d	3	No	Yes	A
2.									
3.									
4.									
5.									
6.									
7.									
↓									

CODE:

Age	Use actual age
Sex	1 = Female; 2 = Male
Siblings	Use actual number; put under O if older than student, Y if younger.
Previous Courses	1 = A comprehensive home economics course 2 = Two comprehensive home economics courses 3 = A semester course in: a = Housing b = Child Development c = Consumer Education d = Family Relations e = Nutrition and Foods f = Textiles and Clothing g = Parenting h = Interior Design 4 = Occupational Course
Career Goals	1 = Get a job 2 = College 3 = Vocational-Technical School 4 = Other
Currently Working	Use Yes or No
FHA/HERO Member	Use Yes or No
Course Grade	Use actual grade

FIGURE 2. Coded Format

Current Date _____

Name _____ Sex: ____ Female ____ Male

Date of Birth _____

Name of Home Economics course you are taking _____

_____

Parents/Guardians Occupation(s). List for both. _____

_____

Number of Brothers and/or Sisters and Age of Each _____

_____

List the Home Economics courses you have taken _____

_____

_____

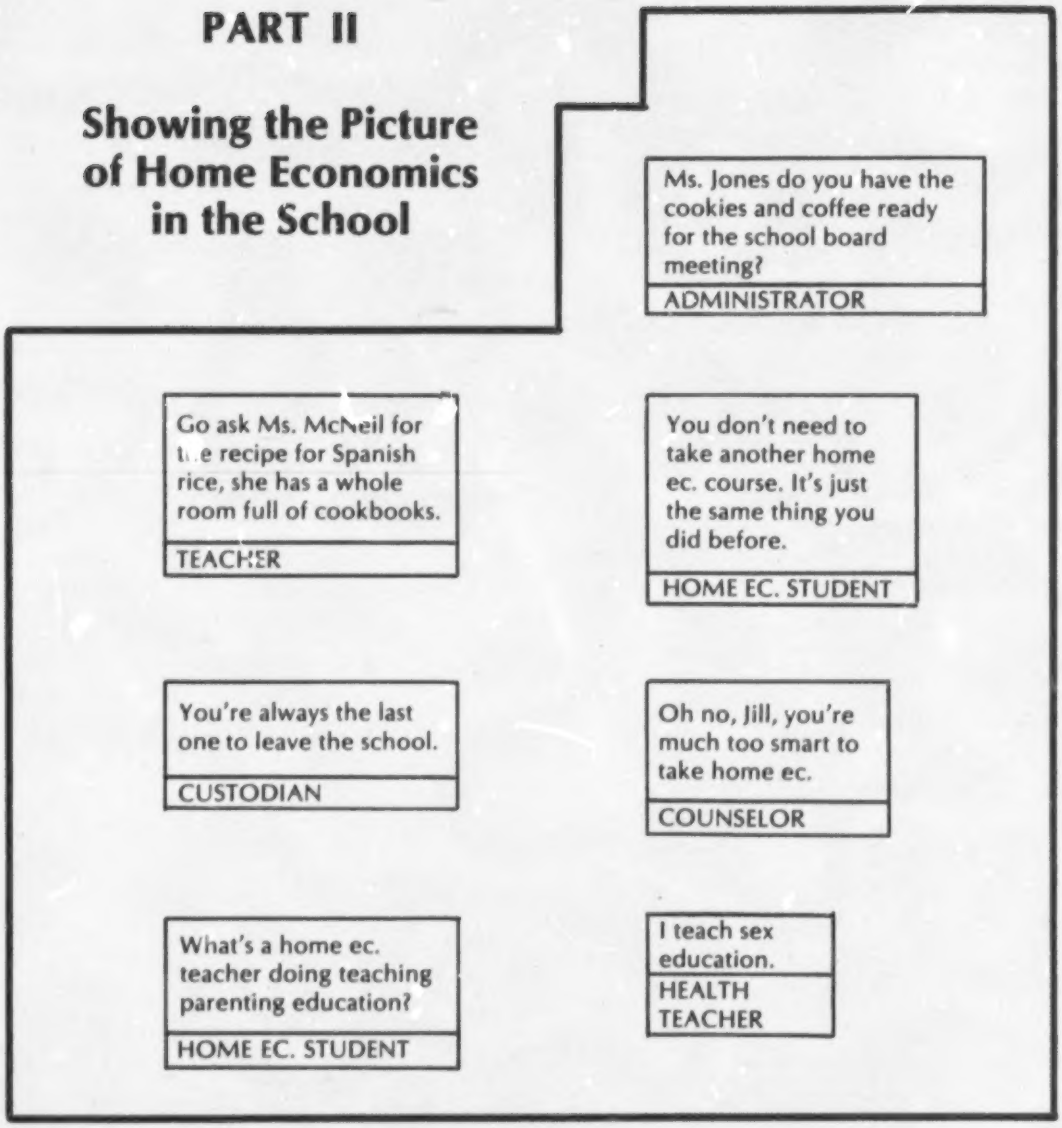
Do you have a job? ____ Yes ____ No. If yes, what is your job? _____

_____

FIGURE 3. Non-Coded Format (Students complete.)

PART II

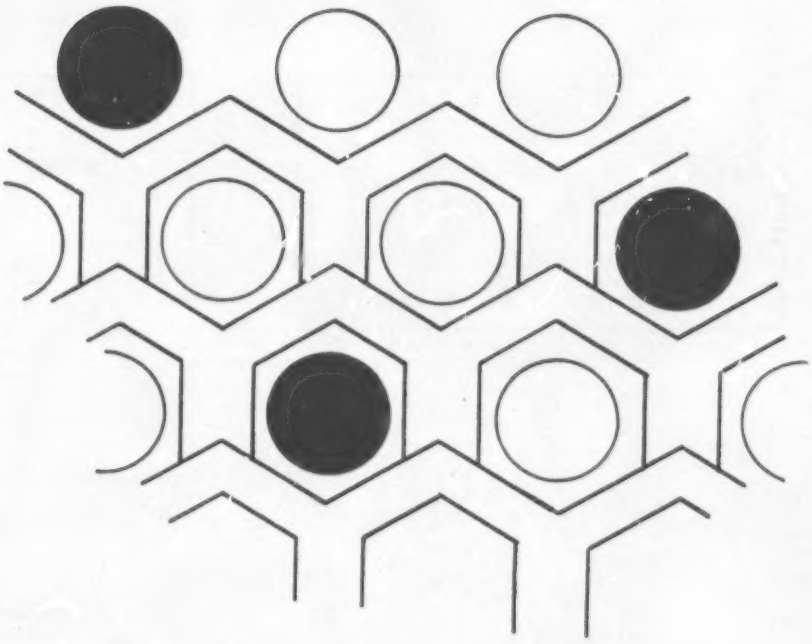
Showing the Picture of Home Economics in the School


Ms. Jones do you have the cookies and coffee ready for the school board meeting?
ADMINISTRATOR
Go ask Ms. McNeil for the recipe for Spanish rice, she has a whole room full of cookbooks.
TEACHER
You don't need to take another home ec. course. It's just the same thing you did before.
HOME EC. STUDENT
You're always the last one to leave the school.
CUSTODIAN
Oh no, Jill, you're much too smart to take home ec.
COUNSELOR
What's a home ec. teacher doing teaching parenting education?
HOME EC. STUDENT
I teach sex education.
HEALTH TEACHER

Do you see anything familiar in the picture above? Many home economics programs suffer because no public relations effort is made inside the school. For a brighter picture of *your* program in *your* school, try some of the ideas in this section.

There are three major sources for public relations in the school—the student, school personnel, and the teacher. A successful in-school public relations program must involve all three.

PUBLIC RELATIONS WITH STUDENTS



Look at last year's issues of the school newspaper. How many articles were there on the home economics program or students in the program? What subject areas did the articles relate to? Would the articles attract your attention if you were a student? Or a teacher? Did the articles give an accurate view of your program? Is it the view you desire? Were there feature articles as well as news of upcoming events?

Which of the two brief articles below would be most appealing to students? Why?

New Program in Home Ec.

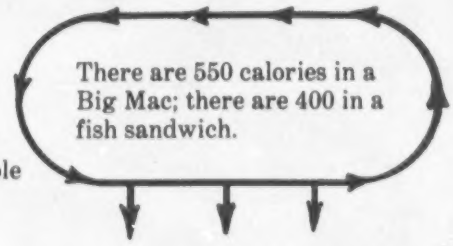
The Home Economics Program will add a new class for juniors and seniors on consumer education next year. All interested students should contact Ms. Jones.

"The Gambler"

Taking chances when you buy? Learn how to be a winner every time. Enroll in "Consumer Education," a new class for juniors and seniors in the Home Economics Department. Class size will be limited to 20. Sign up before May 15 in Room 20A, the Home Economics Department.

Try a "Student Alert" or a "Don't Say We Didn't Tell You" corner. In each issue of the school paper put one little known fact or piece of information. Have students rotate the responsibility for finding and submitting the item. Always credit the Home Economics Department.

For Example



This information brought to you by the Lakemore High School Home Economics Dept.

Some Suggestions for School Newspaper Articles and Possible Headlines

What former home economics students remember about home economics classes
(SINGLE PARENT FATHER GLAD HE TOOK HOME ECONOMICS)

Reactions of visitors to program events of classes
(PARENTS PLEASED WITH NEW PARENTING CLASS IN HOME ECONOMICS)

Report on an interesting learning experience (STUDENTS LEARN PROBLEMS OF OTHER COUNTRIES IN GETTING ENOUGH FOOD)

Feature a student who has done exceptionally well on a project
(JOHN ROGERS SCORES HIGH ON HOME ENERGY CONSERVATION)

Field trips, both before and after
(STUDENTS LEARN PAINTS CAN BE HAZARDOUS)

Student honors in FHA/HERO or other Home Economics related groups
(WASHINGTON, D.C.—HERE COMES SALLY MURPHY)

AN IDEA THAT WORKED

At Wood River High School, the Advanced Foods Class conducted a project which captured the attention and enthusiasm of the whole school. Here is their plan.

1. The class made up a survey sheet of all the foods served by the school cafeteria.
2. They passed these surveys out in the lunch line and asked students and faculty to indicate ten of their favorite foods on the list.
3. They tabulated the results and determined the most popular food items.
4. Then, working with the food service staff in the cafeteria, they planned menus for a week including the favorite foods as determined by the survey.
5. They advertised the week with posters and announcements saying "Favorite Food Week—Sponsored by your friendly Home Economics Department."
6. During favorite food week they posted the nutritive values of foods with those foods in the cafeteria line. Suggested menu combinations for the best balanced meals were also posted at the beginning of the cafeteria line.

Favorite Food Week was praised by all and was featured in the school newspaper as a grand success. Requests to have another favorite food week came from administrators, teachers, students, and parents. A request for an encore—what better measure of success!!!

Other Ideas for Student Involvement in Public Relations in the School

Capitalize on hall displays or bulletin boards in areas viewed by most students and teachers. Make sure the Home Economics Department is credited for the display.

Appoint or elect a publicity committee for each class. Publicity responsibilities can be a part of the class assignment—school newspaper articles, a town/city newspaper article, displays/bulletin boards. You may want to rotate the committee members for longer classes.

Display class projects in places where others will see them. Make sure the viewers know the display is from the Home Economics Department.

Many people continue to associate home economics with only clothing and foods. Try displays of class projects in other areas such as: games and stories for children of different ages; personal and family budgets or time use charts; family trees; letters to and from legislators; names of community resources for recreation, or resources for consumer assistance.

Use appealing titles and props for displays and exhibits such as these: "If the Old Woman Who Lived in a Shoe Had Managed Her Time, She'd Know What to Do" or "Call on Us" with a large telephone and agencies listed in numbers. This oversized phone could be put to lots of uses.

Create and use student publicity committees.

AND don't forget the best known communication mechanism, the student mouth. You may not be able to control this public relations activity, but be aware that it is one which can recruit or turn away potential students.

PROJECTING A PICTURE OF HOME ECONOMICS THROUGH SCHOOL PERSONNEL

The following conversation occurred between Lynn Sanderson, a home economics teacher, and Carol Weber, a math teacher.

Lynn: Gosh, I wish it was Friday.

Carol: Have a bad day?

Lynn: I'm ready to explode I'm so mad. Ms. Hunt (the principal) came into my family living class today, unannounced, about a minute before class started, and said she'd be observing part of the class because she had to complete my annual evaluation and it required classroom observation.

Carol: So how did it go?

Lynn: I just know I'm going to get a bad evaluation. Ordinarily that family living class is so great and the discussions move along so well. Today I could hardly get a peep out of anybody.

Carol: Well, my main complaint is that I don't think a 20-minute observation should decide what goes on my evaluation.

Lynn: And wouldn't you think there'd be a better way to help teachers with their problems than noting every little weakness?

Administrators hold key positions in projecting a picture of home economics to the community. If their view of home economics is based on brief, infrequent and unannounced (or short notice) visits, the picture is likely to be distorted. Maybe the problem doesn't lie with the administrators. Rate yourself on public relations with administrators in the following scale by circling the number above each statement that best describes you.

1	2	3	4	5
I have never invited an administrator to my classroom to observe instruction.		I usually invite administrators to a student prepared meal or similar event at least once a year.		I frequently (6 to 8 times a year) invite administrators to my classes to observe.

1	2	3	4	5
I feel that the less I see of the administrators and the less I let them know what I am doing, the better off I am.		I let administrators know when special things are happening in my program.		I make sure the administrators have a copy of my yearly plans and course outlines. I ask them to give me suggestions about my plans.

1	2	3	4	5
I think administrators are usually snooping around to catch you doing something wrong.		I think administrators aren't interested in what's going on in my program because they're too involved with more important things like budgets.		I think administrators like to know about the school's programs and appreciate my efforts to keep them informed.

WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

A Home Economics Teacher received the following memo from the school business manager.

Dear Ms. Jones,

The home ec. department is already receiving several subscriptions—more than any other department. Therefore, I am not forwarding your request for Parents Magazine.

If you had been the teacher, what would have been your reaction?

1. Call the business manager and threaten to go to the board if your order isn't forwarded.
2. Go to the teachers' lounge and "explode" about the lousy business manager.
3. Go home and "explode" about the lousy business manager to your family.
4. Contact the school principal or superintendent and make an official complaint.
5. Contact the business manager, set up an appointment to discuss procedures and decisions on department requisitions.
6. Do nothing and re-order next year.

Now that you have decided how you would react, think about how that reaction would influence the picture of home economics in your school. Would anyone have a more positive picture? Would there be damage done to the picture?

****

MONEY! MONEY! MONEY! Usually there's not enough to go around. Sometimes how much there is remains a big mystery. Many schools use the "ask and we'll see if you'll receive" system. Or perhaps in your school it's the "reasonable handout" method, which may be described as you'll get whatever you ask for as long as it's reasonable. What do department expenses have to do with public relations in the school? You be the judge.

What picture of home economics is presented to the school board and school administrators when the majority of available monies is spent for food items or food related equipment and supplies?

What picture of home economics is presented when teachers who place emphasis on consumer education, management and decision-making are not considered competent enough to develop and follow a departmental budget?

What picture of home economics is presented when no effort is made to find out what funds are available for your program?

What picture of home economics is presented when most of the teaching materials used (books, filmstrips, etc.) are out of date and irrelevant?

What picture of home economics is presented when funding requests are kept to a bare minimum (so budget managers will not be irritated)?

What picture of home economics is presented when people with little or no knowledge of the program are allowed to make the decisions about the budget?

What picture of home economics is presented when no effort is made to increase input into budget processes?

What picture of home economics is presented when errors are continuously made in the purchasing process?

****

A-V COORDINATOR special education instructor Nurse
Custodian TEACHER AIDS Lunch Room Workers
vocational education coordinator WORK STUDY STUDENTS
SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS school psychologist teacher aids
student helpers CURRICULUM COORDINATOR secretaries

This is only a partial list of all the school personnel who may help you in developing positive pictures of the Home Economics program. Only a small part of that picture may come from the home economics teacher. We have to depend on others. What can we do to enable these people to help us? First, each must have a positive but accurate view of the program and know what it is about. Can you think of one way in which you could help each of the personnel identified above to obtain such a view?

COOPERATIVE PROJECTS — WHAT'S THE POINT?

Cooperative projects in which you and other school personnel combine efforts helps develop an understanding of your program. Have you tried

. . . combining efforts with the **chemistry teacher** in setting up and discussing textile and nutrition experiments; having the chemistry teacher teach basic metric measures and you teach use of metrics in "everyday life" (to his/her classes and yours)?

. . . having **elementary teachers** come to your class to teach about children's developmental characteristics, needs and interests; supervising children (at play, during mealtime, etc.); guiding children in creative expression? Then when your students write stories and devise games or projects for children, they can try them in the elementary classes and get real experience with children?

. . . cooperating with the **agriculture teacher** to develop some joint lessons of interest to both classes on food and fiber production and on role of farm families in the society?

. . . working together with the **English teacher** to study human development and personality concepts through current literature (as well as writing style and content)?

. . . teaching physiology and human relations with a **biology teacher** as a shared effort in teaching sex education? Teaching a joint class on food safety?

. . . bringing the **guidance counselor** into your classroom to help students in clarifying career interests. Then you can serve as the reference person for the counselor when students seek home economics related career information.

What's the point in interdisciplinary projects? Don't home economics teachers usually teach most of that? Why use extra time and effort arranging cooperative approaches?

THE POINT IS that having other teachers in the home economics classroom will help them develop a better picture of what home economics is.

THE POINT IS that having the home economics teacher in other classrooms would help expand students' pictures of what home economics is.

THE POINT IS BETTER PUBLIC RELATIONS WITHIN THE SCHOOL!!

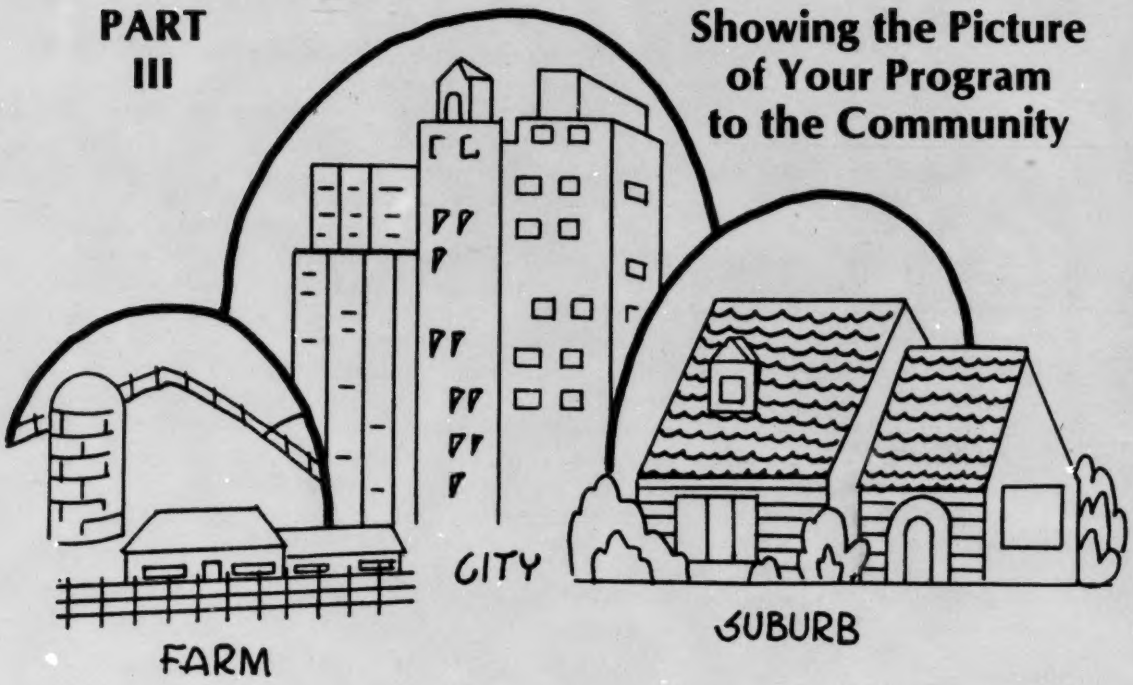
THE HOME ECONOMICS TEACHER— THE KEY TO IN-SCHOOL PUBLIC RELATIONS

Enlisting others in the school to help develop a better picture of the home economics program is largely a responsibility of the teacher. But that responsibility is preceded by the key role of the teacher in program development. Trick photography is not a reliable base for public relations and false advertising usually leads to negative images. Success in public relations begins and is continuously dependent upon a good home economics program developed by the home economics teacher. That's a BIG responsibility! So what helps are available to you in fulfilling this gigantic job? Professional development opportunities have great variety so choice is possible. Perhaps you might want to try some of the following alternatives.

1. Continuing education course(s)
2. Getting another degree
3. Developing a personal plan for renewed motivation and enthusiasm in the classroom
4. Reading or self-study in a particular area
5. Visiting other programs (home economics and non-home economics)
6. Sharing ideas with other teachers (in person or by phone or mail)
7. Interaction through professional organizations and meetings

PART III

Showing the Picture of Your Program to the Community



Whether you teach in an urban, rural or suburban area, the community and its people are concerned about your home economics program. This may be only because they are interested in their tax investment or a host of other reasons, but nonetheless they are an audience that should receive information about what you are doing.

Not only is it to your advantage to communicate with the community, but you have an obligation to share information with community members. Here are some suggested ways that may help you communicate more effectively with audiences in your community.

AN ADVISORY COUNCIL— ONE OF THE BEST COMMUNITY PUBLIC RELATIONS TOOLS

If your program is vocationally approved, you are required by law to have an advisory council. Most schools have a general advisory group for their total vocational program. This approach is very common and can save time and effort for the school administrator; however, it may be worth the extra effort to encourage or carry out yourself the establishment of a local advisory committee specifically for your home economics program. There are a variety of reasons why a home economics advisory council can be useful to you, but in this publication we will stress the value of such a group as a public relations tool for the home economics program.

Of course you will want to select individuals for your advisory council who will contribute valuable expertise to your program plan, but consider these attributes also to insure a strong public relations component for your group:

- Individuals who are adept at working with and speaking to the public.
- Persons who are likely to view your program in a positive way, that is, individuals who see the importance of teaching home economics subject matter to young people.
- People who are well respected by a variety of audiences within the community.
- Individuals who are in a position to speak to groups within the community, i.e., a retired person, a full-time homemaker, a club officer. Some may have the time, others may have the opportunity to address community audiences.

Choosing individuals with these attributes is a good first step to insure that your advisory council will be a public relations tool for you. However, this is not the end of your responsibility. It is important to assist these advisory council members in

- Saying appropriate things about the program to the appropriate audience. That is you must choose the right person for the job and help them decide what is most important for the particular audience to know about the home economics program.
- Recognizing opportunities for carrying out public relations in the community. Keep yourself informed and in turn communicate to advisory council members an agenda of community activities at which the home economics program might be promoted.
- Projecting the image of your program. It may be the advisory council member who does the actual presentation, but you as the teacher need to be instrumental in developing materials (slide-tape presentations, brochures) for advisory members to use in addressing community audiences. This could be an advisory council project under your direction.
- Realizing that public relations can take place in informal conversations as well as formal presentations. This means that even in day-to-day conversations with community members advisory people are carrying out public relations. Care must be taken to avoid off-hand remarks in casual conversation that undo all the planned public relations carried out.

Often a task is needed to provide a purpose for organizing and convening advisory councils. Public relations might be the focus for initiating a home economics advisory council for your program. It will give real purpose to the formation of such a group.

PARENTS AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

Parents may be the most important audience you address. After all, they have a vested interest in your program, since the subject matter you teach has a strong bearing upon the values and traditions which parents may be trying to promote at home. The home economics program may be a source of real concern to parents if they are not kept informed and are not made a part of the home economics activities in your school. Rumors are a poor source of information and unfortunately too many parents have only rumors as their knowledge of school activities.

Parents need accurate and periodic communication about the program activities and your plan for their son's or daughter's class. When you interact with parents, be as positive and informative as possible.

AN IDEA

THAT WORKED

Kate was busy with all the end-of-the-year extra duties, but she just felt it was so important to let parents know something about the success she had felt this school year. She wanted to personalize the letters, telling about each student's accomplishments, but where would she get the time? Well, she made the time and finally finished a large stack of letters to all the parents. She felt good.

She felt even better when she received this letter in the mail one summer day.

Dear Mrs. White,

Thank you for a very kind and heartwarming letter regarding my son, Steven. As a parent, it is very meaningful and fulfilling to receive comments of such a positive nature.

I would like to respond and commend you as a teacher—it is a special person that will take the time to demonstrate the caring and concern for their students as you have done.

Again "Thank You" for your kind words, they were most welcome.

Sincerely,

John Mundorf

Sometimes you may find that parents have questions you cannot answer on the spot. Offer to look for the answer and get back to them as soon as possible. You will be surprised at the reaction your effort will create.

Earlier in this booklet you were encouraged to analyze your program for its impact on students and to collect demographic information related to the program. Many questions parents will have may concern this type of information. Having yearly plans and records available will make parents' questions easier to answer and show them you are willing to put the facts on the line.

A guide which outlines the What, How and When of communicating with parents is on page 34. Remember it is a guide and in your own situation you may find that you have other things to communicate, you have different ways of communicating and you communicate with more or less regularity. This guide may give you some ideas.

Besides extending classroom learning to the home, *home experiences* are a good communication tool for working with parents. They are the mirror of the in-school program for family members and the living laboratory of home economics programs. Home experiences need to communicate that the home economics profession is concerned with good home and family living. The questions below could serve as criteria for selecting realistic and worthwhile home experiences.

1. Is the experience realistic? Does it relate to something which actually occurs within home and families?
2. Does the experience relate to an important aspect of home and family living? Is the experience related to basic home and family functions and responsibilities?
3. Does the experience relate to problems and/or issues which have consistently been a concern in homes and families for many generations? Is the experience related to just a temporary problem for one or a few families or is it common to most families over time?
4. Has the experience been planned? Does the student understand the importance of the experience? Is the student able to explain to family members what is being done and why?

(continued on page 47)

Communicating With Parents

What to Communicate	How to Communicate	When to Communicate
Philosophy	PTA meetings, coffees, tours, home visits	On-going throughout the year; at the time of implementing a new program
Curriculum Changes	Presentations, course catalog, newsletters, neighborhood coffees	Prior to beginning of semester, before registration, back-to-school night or as appropriate
Student Progress	Personal phone calls, letters, parent-teacher visits	When needed to communicate positive or negative reports
Positive Student Achievement	Personal visit, letter or phone call, newsletter, television, radio	When appropriate; this is an on-going effort
Calendar of Events for Each Month	Special monthly bulletin, local and student newspaper	Monthly
Various Information Related to the Program	PTA, neighborhood coffees	Once each semester or more often if appropriate
Field Trips and Other Activities	Newsletters, permission slips	At least one week prior to the activity.

Adapted from Kobel, Daniel Jr., Watson, Karin Stork, Gooden, Rosetta and Shylo, Bruce. *Public Relations Handbook for Vocational Education in Large Cities.* The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio. National Center for Research in Vocational Education, June 1978. (ED 173 580)

AN IDEA

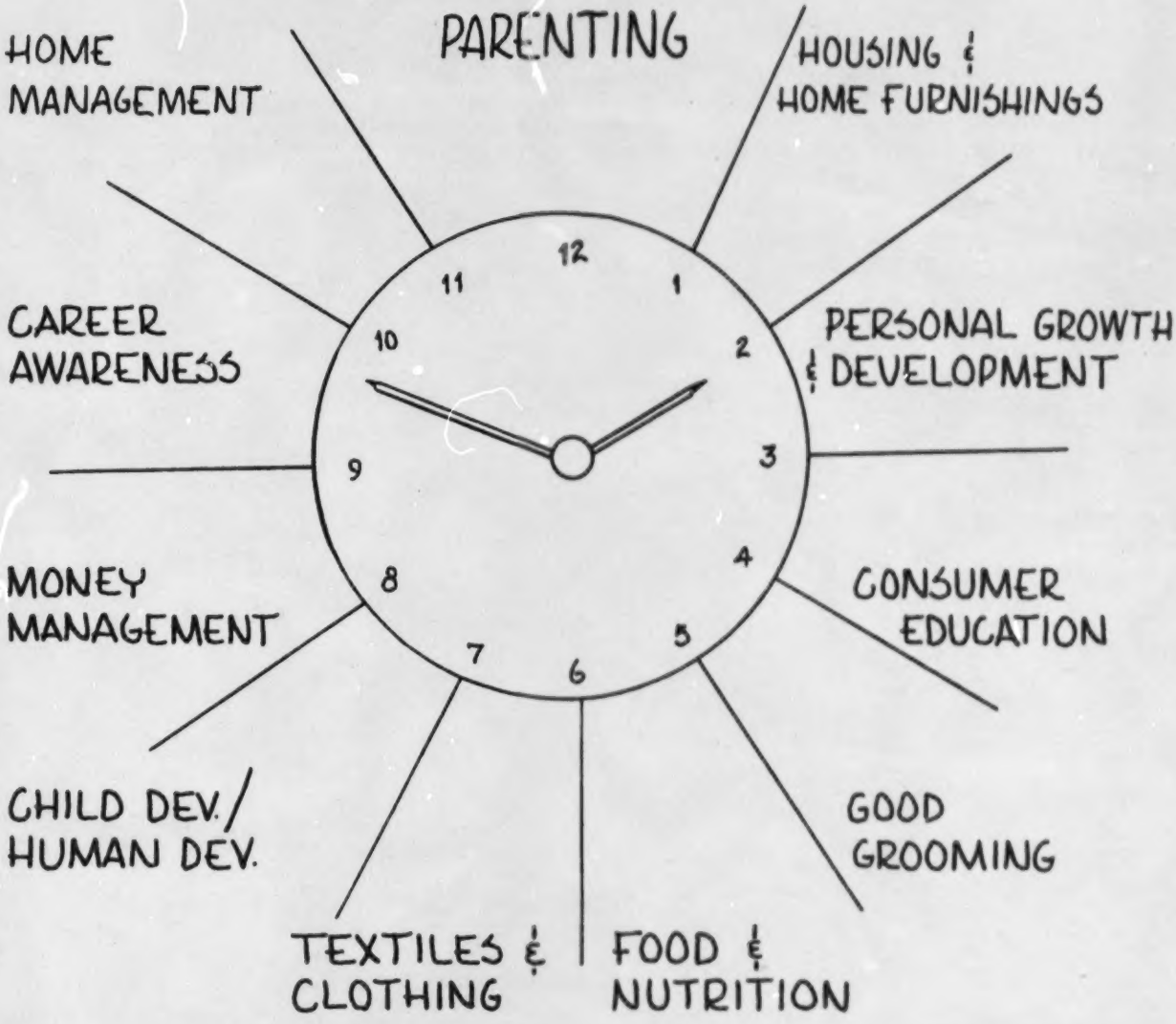
THAT WORKED

Parent-teacher conferences were looming on the horizon and Cathy, a first-year teacher, shuddered at facing the parents of her students. Since arriving at her school in August, she had changed the curriculum considerably, including less time on food preparation and clothing construction and more attention to consumer education and family relations. Initial feedback via the grapevine gave Cathy the impression that she might have lots of explaining to do when Parent's Night arrived. "If only I could explain my plan and the reasons why I changed before hand. I'm so afraid I'll get defensive when I come face to face with inquiring parents" were Cathy's remarks to herself.

Why not, she thought, and so Cathy composed a circular to be sent to all parents with a monthly newsletter sent out by the school. Here on the next two pages are what Cathy sent to parents.

The results of this communication with the parents of her students answered parents' questions and allowed Cathy to enjoy Parent's Night. She even received high praises from her principal, other teachers and the parents who received the notice. A REAL SUCCESS STORY!

TAKE TIME TO DISCOVER HOME ECONOMICS



HOME ECONOMICS IS MORE THAN

COOKING & SEWING.

MUCH, MUCH, MORE!!!

Dear Parents,

Hi! I am Cathy Stear the new Home Economics teacher at PCHS. We have begun what I hope will be a very good year with a lot of positive changes.

As the cover shows, Home Economics is much more than cooking and sewing. The goal of the Home Economics program at PCHS is to prepare students for their future roles of wage earner and homemaker. The Home Economics program consists of three levels which are as follows:

Level I: One year comprehensive program for 9th grade students.

Level II: Semester in-depth courses in Housing & Home Furnishings, Human Development, Textiles & Clothing, and Food & Nutrition. (Grades 10-12).

Level III: One semester Adult Living and one semester Consumer Education for 12th grade students.

The chart on the following page gives a brief outline of the areas covered in each class and the number of weeks spent on each area. I hope that this helps you to understand what your son or daughter has been and will be doing in their Home Economics classes. Your input and opinions are an important and very helpful part of the program so please let me know any suggestions you might have.

Thanks for giving your time to discover what Home Economics is all about!

Cathy

School Perkins Co. High School
Teacher(s) Cathy Stear
School Year 1980-81

PROGRAM PLANNING SHEET—CONSUMER AND HOMEMAKING EDUCATION

PROGRAM LEVEL	LEVEL I				LEVEL II					LEVEL III			
COURSE TITLE			Home Economics I, II Comprehensive	Total Weeks for Level I	Home Economics III Food & Nutrition	Home Economics IV Human Development	Home Economics V Housing & Home Furnishings	Home Economics VI Textiles & Clothing	Total Weeks for Level II	Home Economics VII Adult Living	Home Economics VIII Consumerism & Management	Total Weeks for Level III	Total Weeks for Levels I, II, III
GRADE LEVEL(S)	7th	8th	9th										
CONTENT AREAS: Human Development and Interpersonal Relationships			8	8	3	15	2	1	21	18		18	47
Management and Consumerism			3	3	2	1	5	3	11	2	13	15	29
Housing, Furnishings, and Equipment			3	3			10		10			0	13
Food and Nutrition			11	11	15	1			16			0	27
Textiles and Clothing			11	11			2	12	14			0	25
Related Art			2	2			1	1	2		5	5	9
Career Opportunities			1	1	1	1	1	1	4	1		1	6
TOTAL WEEKS			39	39	21	18	21	18	78	21	18	39	166

Writing a joint letter with parents to a legislator about a home and family issue or concern currently being felt by families.

Shadowing a family member on the weekend to understand roles, responsibilities, management patterns, values, etc.

Assuming a new home responsibility.

Doing a home energy audit.

Arranging storage space for greater convenience and better use.

Comparison shopping with family for item(s) to be purchased for the home.

Evaluation of home spaces for suitability at different stages of the life cycle.

Identification of resources within the home and the community for inexpensive family recreation.

Working with an elderly person and/or person from a culture different from one's own to understand age and/or ethnic differences and similarities in various aspects of family life.

Eliminating home safety hazards.

FOCUSING ON INFORMATION NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY

Although you may be reaching a portion of community members when you provide information to parents, there are still many audiences in the general community who need to know about your home economics program. Young couples without children, singie individuals, older citizens and community businesses all have a stake and an interest in your program. Programs supported by tax dollars are everybody's business.

LOOK

One way of getting information about your program to the community is to get community members involved in the program. Here are some ideas:

- Invite a new car owner to share the decision making process involved in making the final decision to buy the particular car they chose. Also invite a car dealer to explain options available when purchasing or acquiring transportation.
- Have a panel composed of people who live in various housing alternatives in the community to explain what it's like to live in that particular housing type, i.e., high rise apartments, condominiums, mobile homes, one-family house, duplex.
- Help students understand the elderly and their needs by having class spend time at a nursing home in the community.
- Publicize student field trips to various sites in the community. Let people know that you are relating your teaching to everyday life in the community.
- Using merchants' windows for displays and exhibits. This is a way of communicating to the whole community and also of involving local business people with what you're doing in your program.

All of the ideas involve the community in your program and by involving the community, the community in turn learns about what you are doing in home economics. An excellent source of ideas and strategies related to community involvement for home economics programs can be found in an article by Sonia Price entitled "Reaching Out Through Vocational Home Economics" in the December 1976 issue of the *American Vocational Journal.*

Besides using the community as resources for your classes, your program can aid and promote facets of your community. Here are some ideas.

- Create a speakers' bureau which will make presentations to civic groups. Identify home economics faculty and students (THIS WOULD BE A GREAT FHA PROJECT) who are willing and able to discuss home economics. Make contacts with civic organizations to make them aware of this resource.
- Provide recognition for individuals in the community who support home economics activities.
- Involve the public in your program through sharing of school facilities and sharing teacher and student expertise with groups in the community.

AN IDEA

THAT WORKED

Pam who had been teaching successfully for four years was encouraged by her principal to write an article for the local newspaper explaining what he felt was a unique way to incorporate real experiences with children into a child development course. Pam was reluctant to tell the story because she felt she was doing nothing special, just the best she could with the resources available. With the continued encouragement of her administrator, Pam worked with a student in the high school who wrote for the local paper and an article finally appeared which described the activities of the child development class.

To Pam's surprise, when students signed up for fall classes several months after the article appeared she saw that the enrollment in her child development class had tripled. Investigation of the phenomena showed what you might suspect. Parents and other interested persons who read the article were so taken with the experiences offered in child development that they encouraged students to take advantage of the class.

Here is the article that bred success!

The Plattsmouth, Nebraska, Semi-Weekly Journal
PAGE 7 Monday, Nov. 24, 1980

Elmwood School Notes

Child Development at Work

The child development class of Elmwood high school, taught by Mrs. Pam Wright, is now working with various groups. They are learning children really do develop. EHS students visit the Elmwood preschool run by Mrs. Judy Douglas and Terry Bevins, the speech therapy class taught by Mrs. Shirley West, the kindergarten class taught by Mrs. Jacqueline Wehrman and the first grade class taught by Mrs. Pam Knox.

Mrs. Wright states, "The reason our students are out working with children is that experience is a good teacher. By actually working with the various age groups, the material learned in class means so much more." She used the example that a lesson on socialization is highlighted by the observation each student made that week in lab. Differences and similarities noticed in each age group make the class more interesting.

The students actively work with the children. They may work under the direction of the teacher or they may plan and direct their own activities.

Mrs. Wright thinks that the greatest lesson Elmwood high school students in child development class learn "is that it can be very difficult being a parent, but there are also many rewards!"

Mrs. Wright's statement is true to the workers in the various locations. All the students get some kind of enjoyment out of helping.

Working at the pre-school are Leroy Behrends, Kathy Fisher and Kelly Hendrix. They work with children ages 2-4, usually 10-12 in a class.

These students help the preschoolers do anything from tying shoes to playing games. Leroy Behrends says, "In the pre-school, my job is mostly to set an example for the children, to show them to be cooperative and to help them learn." He adds that children usually enjoy themselves. Kelly Hendrix thinks the children are learning how to get along and work with each other. She concludes, "We also are learning how to care more about children and how to care for them." In showing what the pre-school children think of EHS students, Kathy Fisher sums it all up, "They miss us if we don't come down to the pre-school."

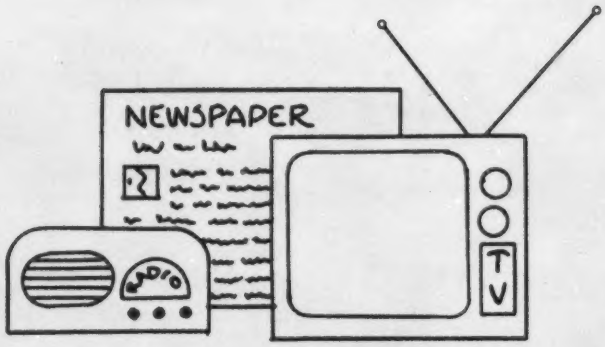
Cathy Clark tells about how challenging it is to work with speech therapy students. She works with five students and says, "This change of scenery has been enjoyed by me and my students."

In asking Jonna Hansen to say something about the first grade of Elmwood public school, the journalism staff got these words, "It's really touching to sit and watch them eying over a problem and then discovering the solution." She says she enjoys the variety this offers her.

Joy Snyder, the kindergarten helper, tells of some activities. "They've been working on their numbers, 1-5, and on listening to instructions. They act out rhymes and listen to records or do worksheets. Then, they get out their health or social studies books." And, that's it for one day.

These students are taking time out to care and share.

PUBLICIZING THE SUCCESS OF YOUR PROGRAM



Everybody loves a winner and if you have made changes in your curriculum which are seen as a positive step or if your enrollment has increased LET PEOPLE KNOW. To use an old cliche nothing breeds success like success. Sharing ideas with other professionals as well as with key people in influential decision-making positions is important.

Let's LOOK at an example.

In the September/October, 1980 issue of *Illinois Teacher*, Fran Simmermaker wrote an article about her home economics program—"Enrollments Are Up At Northside!" Fran describes her success in turning a once strictly cooking and sewing program into an exciting and enticing array of course offerings, including the (according to Fran) death knell ringer—consumer education.

In her article Fran shares the reasons for success, concerns which cropped up during the course of implementing changes and the heart-warming news that the change was a success because enrollment increased in her elective home economics program.

Once the article was off the press, Fran could send it to key people in and outside her community to let them know not only of the program's success, but that the story of this success appeared in a nationally circulated educational publication. For sure, her superintendent, state legislators and town leaders would be glad to see how she put Columbus, Indiana, on the map in a positive way.

If you read Fran's account in the *Illinois Teacher*, you too may be inspired to share the secrets of your successes. Publication in a periodical is one avenue; T.V., radio or newspapers offer other routes for publicizing success stories. But until you put it together, write it down, only you will be able to bask in the glory of what you've done. SHARE THE JOY AND PROFIT BY THE SHARING!

Using the mass media may sound like an awesome task to most people. But in our society today, radio, T.V. and newspapers are our most ready and appealing sources of information. So learning to use these outlets is extremely important. Depending on your locale, you will have different accessibility to various forms of mass media. In a small town you will have little if any access to T.V. as a news outlet, but newspapers are always eager for local stories. In larger communities, radio and T.V. are more possible as alternatives for information sharing. Locally produced segments or those shows directed at youth would be interested in school programs and activities. Many "Accent on Youth" programs have sprung up in the last few years and could provide an outlet for information about your program.

A key point about working with the media is to make sure they tell the story you want to be told. You can insure this by providing accurate and thorough information. The following guidelines are most specifically for newspapers, but they will serve as a guide for preparing information for radio and T.V. as well.

LOOK

Rules for Preparation of a News Release from the Public Relations Society of America

LOOK

STYLE: There are two main types of newspaper stories:

1. The *straight news story* is a factual, informative account of a newsworthy event—e.g., your proposed budget for the coming year. Such stories generally are written in "pyramid style," with the most important elements in the lead paragraph and the least important elements in the end. Remember to answer the "5 W's" and "H" questions (who, what, where, when and how?) early in the story. Keep sentences and paragraphs short and avoid mechanical errors in spelling, punctuation, etc.

2. The *feature story* is one with little straight news content, but a great deal of "human interest" to significant segments of a paper's subscribers. Its style is much less rigid than news story style, and depends mainly on the ability and interest of the reporter. Generally do not attempt to write feature stories for submission to a paper. Instead, let the appropriate editor or reporter know you have a subject you believe is worth a feature. If the editor or reporter agrees, the story will get written; if not, you will not have wasted time writing.

STATIONERY: Fancy, tinted, printed news bureau stationery is wasted. It looks commercial and doesn't fit normal copy style. Don't shout NEWS. Editors decide that.

IDENTIFICATION: The name, address and telephone number of the person releasing the news should appear at upper left or directly after the story.

RELEASE DATE: Most items should be marked "for immediate release." Stipulate times only when news obviously warrants holding until a certain hour.

DATELINE: Start the story with the name of the city in all caps, e.g., COLUMBUS—

FORM: Use wide margins and double space copy so that editors can edit.

HEADLINES: Do not indicate a headline—that is the editor's business. Skip two inches between release line and body of copy so that editor can insert the desired headline.

LENGTH: Never make a release two pages if one will do. Edit your material tightly. Make sure it is accurate, timely and not too "pluggy." Do not split a paragraph from first to second page. Put "MORE" at the bottom of the first page. Put "30" or ## at the end of the release.

CONTENT: News releases on the following topics should be sent to the appropriate publications routinely (i.e., planned for and executed so as to be *timely*).

1. Program development, policies, and achievements (on a selective basis)

   a. New services to be offered, preferably "first of a kind" or significant in some other respect, such as the Legal Aid Society's new program for senior citizens.
   b. Important changes in policy—e.g., changing of fee structure, agency relationships.
   c. Agency expansion and progress—e.g., new facilities, new programs or organizational changes designed to make your services "superior."
   d. Annual report—e.g., releasing a year-end assessment of operational success.

e. Major financial grants or losses. Don't be afraid to release bad news. If all your releases announce good news, you will be ignored by the editor.

2. Agency personnel
   a. Newly-elected and promoted officers, new staff.
   b. Retirees (including board members of long-standing).
   c. Staff and elected members involved in community, professional and civic affairs—offices held, awards and achievements earned.
   d. Any staff or elected members honored or recognized.

3. Agency involvement in community and areas of social concern
   a. Programs or services aiding the community, programs aimed at minority groups and coordinated with area schools or other organizations, significant training programs and opportunities, policies or programs specifically aimed at influencing citizen awareness and participation.

4. Special events
   a. Well-known speaker sponsored by the agency (for example addressing gathering of agency personnel, consumers or selected leaders of the community), symposia on community problems or exhibits around town showing achievements and goals of vocational education.

INTERVIEWS: Time permitting, daily papers often are more receptive to ideas for interview stories than to prewritten news releases. Reporters like to find out for themselves, and editors are understandably skeptical of information not obtained by their own reporters. If you arrange an interview, be sure: (1) to be on time; (2) to be able to get any necessary statistics within a few minutes; (3) when possible, to know the names and interests of the reporter in advance.

PHOTOGRAPHS: Daily papers usually prefer to take their own photographs, maintain large highly professional photographic staffs and facilities. Generally, send only "mug shots" of individuals to the daily papers unless you have checked first with the editor. If the paper believes the story is worth a picture, it will send a photographer. Weekly newspapers generally will use black and white photos if they are submitted on glossy paper, usually 5" x 7". Avoid the up-against-the-wall with a plaque shot. A little originality in planning a photograph can result in far wider distribution and publication. Make sure that everyone mentioned in the photograph is mentioned in the story and that they are properly identified. Always submit black and white photos, and try to keep vertical shots vertical (portraits, tall objects) and horizontal shots horizontal (events, wide objects).

DEADLINES: Make it a point to meet the editors of the dailies. Learn their deadlines—generally, about 11 a.m. for the evening paper and 7 p.m. for the morning paper. Don't be afraid to call near deadline with a breaking news story, but make sure it really is urgent. Generally, wait until the slack times (afternoons are good for both papers) to deliver feature ideas and nonbreaking news releases. Try to alternate between the dailies in choosing which gets the "break" on a story. Weekly editors generally will accept mail releases—the farther in advance of their deadlines, the better.

PLACEMENT: If a story pertains to someone living in a particular suburban or urban area, make sure to send the information to the most local paper.

INFLUENCING PUBLIC POLICY

Legislators and policy makers are interested in keeping the public happy. Making sure they know that your program is important to their constituents will make a big difference in how they make decisions related to the needs of your program and home economics program in general. The schedules of most public figures will make it difficult for them to be involved in your program, but if an opportunity arises, inviting policy makers to participate in activities related to your program is certainly to be encouraged. Most likely these individuals will be more likely to participate in important events that attract large crowds of people. Events such as awards banquets, ceremonies, etc., are the activities which will appeal to public figures.

Although the busy schedules of key individuals may keep them from personal involvement with your program, this is no reason for them not to become acquainted with what you are doing. No doubt you will want to keep a scrapbook or some record of events and publicity of your home economics program. Sharing clippings, news releases and other pertinent information with public decision makers will keep them informed of the activities of your program and will make them aware that what you are doing is in the public eye.

Encourage satisfied students, parents, administrators and other community members to share their positive feelings about your program with public officials. You can tell policy makers how well your program is doing, and what it means to the people of the community, but more of an impact can be made by having the people directly affected by your programs communicate their satisfaction to these key individuals. Be sure to communicate this fact to various audiences in your community.

Individuals who should be on your list of policy makers include:

- members of the U.S. Congress,
- state legislators,
- members of city and town governing boards,
- office of education officials at the national and state levels,
- officials of organizations interested in home economics education (HEEA, AVA, AHEA are examples).

KEEP THOSE CARDS, LETTERS AND MESSAGES COMING!

Look ↪

AN IDEA

THAT WORKED

Disturbed by the announcement that Consumer and Homemaking funds will probably suffer excessive cuts in the federal budget, Anita wondered what she could do. She had written a letter herself to her congresswoman and senator, but she felt more needed to be done. What would really catch the attention of the legislators? The students, she thought are really the ones who will be affected by the funding cuts.

She met with her FHA officers that day and explained she shared her concern with them about the funding cuts and asked if they thought the chapter could do something related to this concern. They decided to initiate a letter writing campaign not only in their local chapter, but to try to get all the chapters in the state to have members send letters to the national legislators who represented their state. The plan was put into action and dozens of letters appeared in Washington—from students. Here's one sample from the legislators' mailbags.

Dear Senator Less,

At our FHA meeting today my teacher told us you weren't going to let us have the money we need for our home ec. program. (She says you call it Vocational Consumer and Homemaking.) We really need the money you know. There are lots of kids in the home ec. classes and we learn really good stuff.

I know you have a job to do because prices are high. We do learn about inflation in home ec. and how to live cheaper. We learned about how little kids grow and what they need so we can be good parents. I know how to eat better for my body from home ec. These things are important to us teenagers. So PLEASE give us enough money to keep these classes at our school.

Taking away money we need is like a punch in the stomach. It hurts.

Your friend (I think)

Betsy Farr

Don't you think letters like this would get the attention of public policy makers?

PART IV Some Additional Public Relations Helps and References

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